

## INSET

Discrimination in Science

Discrimination against ethnic and regional groups in research institutes and in entering higher level educational institutions, though not an official policy, is widespread and takes on an almost systematic nature in the Soviet Union. This discrimination is perhaps most acute and most universal in the case of the Jewish group. Ironically, Jews make up a significant portion of Soviet scientists and intelligentsia. The discriminatory policies have reduced the effectiveness of the contribution of Jewish scientists and caused large numbers of them to leave the country in the late 1970s and early 1980s during the period of eased emigration policy. Furthermore, there are indications that Jews are being systematically excluded from entrance into the good technical schools irrespective of their ability. Although this filtering of Jews will certainly prevent highly qualified people from entering the Soviet scientific community, there is no firm evidence as yet that this has measurably reduced the productivity of Soviet science. This is due in part to the large pool of people available to draw on for scientific careers. In addition, in the case of mathematics, where discrimination has been particularly high, the Soviets have been successful in the past in identifying exceptional talent at an early age and pushing its development. We expect them to be able to continue such targeting in the future. It is nevertheless clear that the West, and in particular the US, has gained some exceptionally good Jewish scientists in recent years, largely as a result of discrimination in the Soviet Union.

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